

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Notre Dame de Chicago

AND/OR COMMON

Notre Dame de Chicago Roman Catholic Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1338 West Flourney Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

VICINITY OF

7th

STATE

Illinois

CODE

COUNTY
Cook

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Catholic Bishop of Chicago, A corporation sole, Notre Dame de Chicago

STREET & NUMBER

1335 West Harrison Street

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

VICINITY OF

STATE

Illinois

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cook County Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

228 South LaSalle Street

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Information presently unavailable. Will check further.

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
recent fire damage	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

ORIGINAL CONDITION

The church is a successor to the original St. Louis Church constructed for the large French population. In 1865, an earlier Notre Dame de Chicago was built at the N.W. corner of Halsted and Congress Streets. In 1885, the present location at Flournoy and Ada Streets was purchased and the first stage of construction, the basement church, was dedicated in 1889. The present Notre Dame de Chicago was dedicated in 1892. The church building, constructed of Milwaukee gray brick, measured 125' long and 96' wide, height to the roof 42', and height to the top of the cupola 155'.

The church has a Greek cross plan with beveled sections between the arms. Hipped roofs rise above each arm and intersect the roof that cover the central area. This roof has a polygonal plan and rises conelike to its truncated termination. Above this roof is a shallow dome which rises alantern topped by a pointed ribbed dome; originally atop this dome stood a pedestal with a tall statue of the Virgin carved of mahogany wood overlaid with gold. This repetition of columns and arches around the lantern gives an indication of the interior structural character, while the roofs reveal the interior plan and spatial arrangement.

The front facade is flanked by brick stair towers. Its lower two stories are punctuated by arched windows with stained glass. On the third story after a transitional reverse squinch the square plan changes to an octagonal one. Above this story rises a tall pointed ribbed octagonal dome.

The facade between these towers has three stories. The ground floor has three arched portals standing above broad steps. The next story is high and contains a broad arched window. Its tracery contains a rose window. The final story has a pediment set above five arched windows. The second story and the arched window level are framed by coupled pilasters.

The portals lead into a vestibule. It contains a stairway leading to the basement church which covers the entire lower area. At either end is a stairway to the balcony. This balcony with its curved front overhangs the back portion of the church interior.

The plan of the main space is basically that of a Greek cross. The two side arms project slightly as transepts. the entrance end is filled with the vestibule and opposite it is the high altar chapel. In each connecting wall between the arms are two small vaulted chapels with Carrarra marble altars and Corinthian columns. The ring for the dome appears to be supported by a broad arched soffit that appears to be carried by two arches within each wall between the arms. Additional arch support span the arms themselves.

In the interior the sancturay walls and main vestibule were finished in Sienna marble with floors of mosaic tile. The church interior was decorated in ivory, cream and gold with embellished Corinthian columns

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

and decorative plaster archways with large architraves and corbels. The stained glass windows are among the finest from Europe.¹ Donated by influential French parishoners, they number 33 and represent historical scenes from the life of Mary and Christ. The largest, 16' x 26' are in the side arms of the sanctuary. In 1899, a new altar of white marble with designs by Augustine O'Callaghan, 60 onyx columns and a reredos extending across the width of the church was dedicated. There were 3 gold mosaic panels and at each end shrines to St. Mary and St. Anthony.

Notre Dame de Chicago was designed by French-Canadian architect Gregoire Vigeant.² He was born in Quebec in 1853, came to Chicago in 1873, and died in 1918. His obituary in Inland Architect states: "He never did a large volume of work, but had genius for doing things different. He was definitely one of those who formed the group upon whose professional conduct and executions, the present well-developed architectural structure rests."³ Almost none of his Chicago works remain, but in the 1880's he was the architect for a number of residential buildings, churches, and industrial buildings, among them McCoy's New European Hotel (Clark and VanBuren Sts.), the Sodality Building for Holy Family Church (Roosevelt Road), the Hyde Park Presbyterian Church, the Church of Holy Angels, and the parochial residence for Notre Dame de Chicago (Loomis and Harrison Sts. -- still standing).

PRESENT CONDITION

In 1929 the main altar was pushed back to enlarge the sanctuary some 300 sq. feet. Four new stained glass windows were added and the large stained glass window behind the altar was removed. The oak railings have subsequently been replaced by marble railings, Murals by painter Joseph Vittur⁴ were added to the interior of the dome and along the side walls. Most changes are not structural, but rather were required because of superficial deterioration. Some of the original stained glass windows and oak doors have been replaced. A second balcony was installed above the first balcony early in the 1920's to house the Cassava organ. The domes on the two bell towers are no longer copper but asphalt shingles. In June, 1978, lightning struck the main copper dome and mahogany statue of the Virgin Mary. At this time, insurance records are not complete, but professional assessments are that little structural damage was done by the fire. Water damage to the plaster ceiling, interior wood lath, and

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

wiring system may be extensive. The frescoes were affected by water damage as well.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	Historical
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1800-1899; 1888-1934 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Gregoire Vigeant

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Notre Dame de Chicago is significant in architecture because it represents a unique design related to the then-new Romanesque Revival. It shows the shift from Victorian and Gothic Revival with their tendency to the vertical to the Romanesque interest in large, simple forms and broad proportions. The new style called for a few very large windows and colorful interiors, stressing the careful relationship of design, decoration and construction.⁵ In addition, this building shows a distinctly French interpretation of the new style. It is less closely related to the Richardsonian Romanesque than it is to the French Renaissance designs of Philibert Delorme and Francois Mansart. While not directly dependent on either architect, the free adaptation of the Greek cross plan, the exterior with its square domes and hipped roofs, and the spatial complex and vertical emphasis gained by moving upward through a dome, a second cupola, and a tall lantern, all in turn topped by a tall statue, conveys a French rather than an Italian, Spanish or Boston interpretation of both Classical and Romanesque designs. This French flavor is unmistakable, and invests the building with an imagery appropriate to its French genesis.

Historically, Notre Dame is the best extant landmark associated with the French in Chicago. It is the successor of the original St. Louis Church formed in 1850 by the French trappers and traders who settled in Chicago.

To understand the significance, some historical background is necessary. The original St. Louis Church and the first church to serve the French community was built in 1853 by Father Isidore Le Bel. By 1856, the French community had outgrown its modest church and petitioned the Bishop for a new one. Conflicts were beginning to arise between the Irish Bishop O'Reagan and the French community. The french community raised funds to build a new church and had purchased 3 lots at Franklin and Quincy. The same day the Bishop had the church placed on rollers and moved to the lot he had purchased in his own name at Sherman and Polk. The parish committee went to the Bishop to question this action, and were told that they must place the deed for the lots they had purchased in the Bishop's name. A member of the committee, Mr. Rofinot, declared that they could not legally turn over the deed until they could buy the entire lot and they would then own it in the name of the

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CONTINUATION SHEET Two

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

French community, rather than in the name of the Bishop. Mr. Rofinot employed a lawyer but was told that a similar case involving the powerful Bishop of St. Louis had settled in favor of the Bishop, and the committee abandoned its case. The church was moved, and to make sure the French would not occupy pews they had paid for, the Bishop had the church raised 4' from the ground.⁶ It remained unoccupied from May until November of 1859 when a new priest sympathetic to the French was assigned.

The French-Canadians were unable to converse with their pastor in their native tongue and were scattered among neighboring churches. They met in St. Pat's Church and in 1865 were able to dedicate their own church, the first Notre Dame de Chicago, built on a lot on Congress and Halsted Sts. given to them by Bishop Duggan.

In 1866, Father Cote came to Notre Dame and stayed until 1884. In 1884, Father Bergeron came and remained at Notre Dame through its "Age D'Or". Plans for a convent and school were drawn up and in order to finish such plans, Father Bergeron sold the lot on which the first church stood and began construction work with the view transferring the church and school to its new location on Vernon Park Place. The new school was finished in 1885, a new rectory was built in 1886 by Gregoire Vigeant, and in 1888 the basement of the new church was dedicated. In 1892, the present Notre Dame de Chicago was completed. In 1896, Frontenac Hall was built as a meeting hall.

The nomadic habits of the French population kept them moving west until by 1913 the French community had decreased in size and the immigrant Italian population had increased. In 1918, the church was transferred to the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament, a French order, but one that would administer more universally to the Catholic community. The Fathers organized various lay bodies and Notre Dame Church was selected as the site for the International Eucharistic Congress to which thousands came in 1926.

The community around Notre Dame has continued to change, and an Urban Renewal office now occupies the original rectory which had been moved to Harrison and Loomis Sts. The parish school runs a fine gradeschool with an enrollment of 250. The neighborhood is a true ethnic blend of races, religions, and ages. New families are choosing to live in the fine old townhouses and 3-flats found on the tree-lined boulevards and older established residents are joining in the spirit of rejuvenation with pride. Within sight of the church dome, historic Jackson Boulevard is a sign of

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CONTINUATION SHEET Three ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

the glorious history of this part of the city.

Notre Dame Church has long been a symbol of the history of the city, its French origins and its constant change. In the immense city of Chicago Notre Dame is the only surviving French monument in a city discovered and founded by French.

FOOTNOTE LISTING

1. Interocean, May 1, 1892 RE: Church Dedication.
2. Suit was filed against the Catholic Bishop of Chicago and Gregoire Vigeant by architect Jean Wieczbienice. Plaintiff claims his plans were accepted by Archbishop, but he found Vigeant was acting as supervising architect of the building. Chicago Times, 7-21-89
3. Inland Architect, April 1889, Vol. X!!!, No. 4.
4. New World, 11-6-64.
5. Tallmadge, Architecture in Old Chicago.
6. Andreas, History of Chicago, Vol. 1; 1670-1857, p.296.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET Three ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Periodicals

Building Budget, Vol. 1-2, 1885-86
Vol. 3, 1887
Vol. 4, 1880
Vol. 6, 1890

Western Architect, June 1918

Inland Architect and News Record, April 1889, Vol. XIII #4

New World, 9-13-29
11-6-64 (Vittur)

Chicago Times, 9-9-88
7-21-89 (dispute re: Architect)

Interocean, 6-7-85 (Church School Plans)
5-1-92 (Church Dedication and sketch)
5-2-92 (St. Peters)
6-25-99 (Altar Dedication)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Andreas, History of Chicago, Vol. I; 1670-1857, Vol. II; 1872-1885
 Talmadge, T.E., Architecture in Old Chicago, 1940
 Garraghan, Father Gilbert S.J., Catholic Church in Chicago 1673-1871; 192
 Pelletier, Rev. Alphonse, History Notre Dame Church, 1937
 O'Reer, Commercial and Architectural Chicago, 1887
 PERIODICALS -- see addendum sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY LESS THAN ONE

UTM REFERENCES

A	16	445160	4635720	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Candace Schafer

10/6/78

ORGANIZATION

Parishoner -- Notre Dame de Chicago

DATE

226-3695 (area code 312)

STREET & NUMBER

802 South Bishop Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

[Handwritten Signature]

TITLE

Director, Department of Commemoration

DATE

12/28/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ILLINOIS REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

DESIGNATION ORDER

NAME:

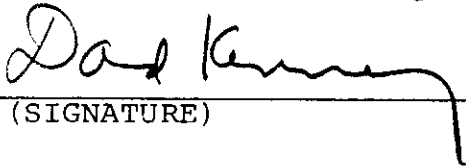
Historic: Notre Dame de Chicago

and/or Common: Notre Dame de Chicago Roman Catholic Church

Critical Historic Features on 1 attached pages

DESIGNATION ORDER

As Director of the Illinois Department of Conservation in accordance with the Illinois Historic Preservation Act (Chap. 127, Sec. 133d Ill. Rev. Stat.), I hereby designate this property as a Registered Illinois Historic Place eligible for the protection and privileges inherent in this designation.


(SIGNATURE)

11/30/79
(DATE)

Notre Dame de Chicago gains its significance because it is a distinctly French interpretation of the Romanesque style and because it may well be the only surviving French monument in Chicago. Its Critical Historic Features are all features from the Critical Historical Period (1884-1892) including but not limited to:

1. The groundplan of the building as defined by its exterior walls.
2. The individual elements of the roof and their relationship comprised of a square dome, surmounted by a hipped roof topped by a dome with a circular base, a second cupola, a tall lantern, and a tall statue.